



LANCE LEIPOLO
HEAD COACH



KENNY LOGAN JR.
#1 | SAFETY



KWAMIE LASSITER II
#8 | WIDE RECEIVER

2021 **XIII** MEDIA DAY



LANCE LEIPOLD



146-39

Career Record

79%

Win Percentage

17

Conference Championships

7

Bowl Game Appearances

Coaching Experience



Buffalo Head Coach



Wisconsin-Whitewater Head Coach



Nebraska-Omaha Assistant Head Coach/OC



Nebraska Recruiting



Wisconsin Assistant Coach

CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



6X National Champion at UW-Whitewater

- Went **109-6** as the head coach at Whitewater.
- Has won 37 games in 6 seasons at Buffalo after the program won 25 the previous 6 seasons.
- Led Buffalo to its **first two bowl victories in program history.**
- Guided Buffalo to its first 10-win season in program history in 2018.
- Coached the Bulls to a No. 23 ranking in the AP Top 25 this past season; the highest ranking in school history.
- Fastest Coach in **NCAA history to 100 career wins.**
- Two-Time MAC Coach of the Year.

2020



2019



Buffalo 17, Marshall 10
Buffalo 31, Charlotte 9

WHAT TO KNOW

Buffalo Offense

Pound the Rock

- No. 1 rushing team in the country** in 2020, averaging **6.71 yards per carry.**
- No. 2 in the country in 2020 in rushing yards per game at 287.4.**
- RB Jaret Patterson ran for **3,884 yards** and **52 touchdowns** in **32 career games.**
- Has averaged at least 28 points per game in each of the last 4 seasons.

Keeping the QB Clean

- No. 1** in the country in **fewest sacks allowed per game at just 0.14** in 2020. In 2019, the Bulls were second in the nation at 0.62; Have led conference in this category for 3 straight years.

Lighting up the Scoreboard

- Averaged 43.4 points per game in 2020; fifth-best in the country.
- Bulls went from 82nd best offense in the country in Leipold's first year to the fifth-best in his final year.**

Buffalo Defense

Making it Hard on 'Em

- Held opponents to **17 points or fewer in four of seven games in 2020**; Allowed just 21.9 points per game, ranking in the top 30 nationally.
- Ranked No. 1 in the MAC in total defense in 2020, allowing 359 yards per game.

Earn Your Yards

- Ranked No. 7 nationally in total defense,** allowing 291.9 yards per game.

No Running Allowed

- Ranked No. 4 nationally in rush defense, allowing 94.2 yards per game on the ground.**

Buffalo Special Teams

- Led the conference in blocked kicks in 2020.
- Punt returner K.J. Osborn led conference in punt return yardage in 2018.**
- Led conference in fewest punt blocks allowed in 2017.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

- 3 players ranked in the PFF 2021 NFL Draft Top 200; Tied with UCF for most by a non-Power 5 school.**
- 24 players named 1st-Team All-Conference the past 2 seasons.
- 56 All-America honors for his Wisconsin-Whitewater players.
- 2016 team had 42 new players and won 8 games in 1st two years and 18 in last two.

NOTABLE PLAYERS



Jaret Patterson | Buffalo | RB

2020 MAC Player of the Year; Rushed for 409 yards in 1 game; Ranked 1st in the nation in rushing yards per game at 178.7; Third in nation in rushing TDs with 19.



Tyree Jackson | Buffalo | QB

2020 MAC Player of the Year; Rushed for 409 yards in 1 game; Ranked 1st in the nation in rushing yards per game at 178.7; Third in nation in rushing TDs with 19. Currently on the Philadelphia Eagles roster.



Khalil Hodge | Buffalo | LB

Two-Time 1st-Team All-MAC; 419 total tackles in 38 career games; 21 career tackles-for-loss.



Malcolm Koonce | Buffalo | DE

Two-Time 1st-Team All-MAC; Led conference in sacks in 2019 with 9; Bronco Nagurski Award Watch List; Ranked as 167th best draft prospect this year.

LANCE LEIPOLD



COACHING HISTORY

2017-present	Kansas (Head Coach)
2015-21	Buffalo (Head Coach)
2007-14	Wisconsin Whitewater (Head Coach)
2004-06	Nebraska-Omaha (Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Coordinator)
2001-03	Nebraska (Administrative Assitant/Recruiting)
1991-93	Wisconsin (Graduate Assistant)
1990	Wisconsin-Whitewater (Assistant Coach)
1989	Doane (Assistant Coach)
1988	Wisconsin-Whitewater (Wide Receivers)
1987	Wisconsin-Whitewater (Quarterbacks)

Lance Leipold, a six-time National Champion, a five-time conference coach of the year and the fastest coach in NCAA history to reach 100 career wins, has been named the 41st head coach in Kansas Football history, Director of Athletics Travis Goff announced on April 30, 2021.

Leipold arrives at Kansas after a successful six-year stay at Buffalo, where in his final three seasons, he posted three straight winning seasons for the first time in 20 years. He won 24 games over the final three seasons, which included a seven-game shortened-season schedule in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, marking the most successful three-year run in Buffalo history.

"I am absolutely thrilled to welcome Coach Leipold, Kelly, Lindsey and Landon to the Jayhawk Family," said Director of Athletics Travis Goff. "He is a man of integrity, a developer of young men, a program builder and a winner. His track record of sustained excellence is exactly what we were looking for in our next leader, and is what the University of Kansas and our fans deserve. His commitment to maximizing our student-athletes' abilities and experience on the field, in the classroom, in the community, and in life after KU is inspiring. Those qualities will attract individuals and develop them into exceptional Jayhawks.

"We conducted an extensive national search that was guided by feedback from many constituents and this opportunity garnered interest from outstanding coaches across the country. We have an obligation to providing a world-class experience for our student-athletes and that remained at the forefront throughout the search. Additionally, we owe

our fans, donors and alumni a football program that will be built for sustained success. I am confident that is what we will provide under the leadership of Coach Leipold. This is a tremendous day for the University of Kansas!"

A proven winner with a strong track record for player development, Leipold served as the head coach at Wisconsin-Whitewater for eight seasons from 2007 to 2014, capturing six NCAA Division III national championships and tallying an astounding record of 109-6.

"I am very thankful to Chancellor Girod and Travis Goff for providing me this opportunity to lead the Kansas Football program, Leipold said. "It is an exciting and humbling opportunity, and this is a day I will never forget. We are going to build this program through developing players, discipline and determination. The philosophies engrained in our programs along the way will be key as we turn this around. This is a program that has a lot of young talent on the roster and has the infrastructure in place to succeed. The best days for this program are ahead, and my family and I are ecstatic to be a part of it. I am ready to get to work and give everything I have to the Jayhawks. Rock Chalk Jayhawk!"

After taking over a rebuilding Buffalo program that went 7-17 in his first two seasons, Leipold put together a record of 30-16 over his final four seasons, including three bowl appearances and two bowl victories with the Bulls.

Leipold is coming off a 2020 season at Buffalo that brought unprecedented success to the program. The Bulls went a perfect 5-0 in the regular season and won the MAC East Division title for the second-straight year. Leipold's squad also beat Marshall in the Camellia Bowl for the program's second ever bowl win and second in as many years.

Buffalo also appeared in the Associated Press Top 25 at No. 24 on December 6, 2020, marking the first-time in school history the Bulls appeared in the national rankings. The team finished the season ranked 25th in both the AP poll and the Amway Coaches Poll. Leipold was named the MAC Coach of the Year for the second time in his career after the record-breaking season.

Showcasing his pristine reputation for player development and a keen eye for recruiting, Buffalo tied a school-record with 12 All-MAC selections in 2020, all of whom were recruited by Leipold. Running back Jaret Patterson led the way, rushing for 1,072 yards in just six games, including a 409-yard performance against Kent State, which is the second-best performance in FBS history.

Patterson was named the winner of the Vern Smith Leadership Award, given to the MVP of the MAC and was also named the MAC Offensive Player of the Year under Leipold's tutelage.

Buffalo also had 12 all-conference players in 2019, a season that culminated in the school's first-ever bowl victory – a 31-9 win over Charlotte in the Makers Wanted Bahamas Bowl. The 2019 team featured one of the best defenses in the school's history. Buffalo ranked seventh nationally in total defense, allowing 291.9 yards per game. The Bulls were also fourth nationally against the run, allowing 94.2 yards per game.

In 2018, Buffalo won 10 games in a season for the first time ever in program history. Leipold's team went 7-1 in MAC play and won the East Division title. The Bulls also won 42-13 at Rutgers, marking the school's first-ever win over a Power 5 opponent. He was named the MAC Coach of the Year and was also a semifinalist for the George Munger College Coach of the Year Award.

In that 2018 season, the Buffalo offense had a record-breaking season. Buffalo scored 484 points, 64 touchdowns and totaled 5,803 yards of total offense, establishing new school records in each category. Quarterback Tyree Jackson was named the MAC Offensive Player of the Year, while Patterson earned MAC Freshman of the Year honors.

In Leipold's third season in 2017, the Bulls gained bowl eligibility for just the third time as an FBS program. The Bulls offense averaged 432 yards per game and led the conference in passing yards per game at 291. Showing an ability for explosive plays, Buffalo produced 20 plays of 45 or more yards on the season.

Leipold became the head coach at Buffalo in December of 2014 after a triumphant career as the head coach at Wisconsin-Whitewater, which saw him earn six National Coach of the Year awards. In his first season there in 2007, the Warhawks went 14-1 and won the Division III national championship. In 2008, the team made it back to the title game and fell to Mount Union.

Wisconsin-Whitewater then went 45-0 over the next three seasons, winning three straight national championships. After a 7-3 campaign in 2012, Whitewater went 30-0 combined in 2013 and 2014 winning two more national titles with Leipold at the helm.

During his time there, Warhawk players totaled 56 All-America honors, with running back Justin Beaver winning the Gagliardi Trophy as the top player in Division III. Brent Allen won the Division III Rimington Award as the top center. Running back Levell Coppage earned D3Football.com Offensive Player of the Year honors, while Cole Klotz won those honors on the defensive side.

Leipold, a native of Jefferson, Wisconsin, began his coaching career at Whitewater in 1987 as a quarterbacks coach. He moved to the University of Wisconsin in 1991, where he served as a graduate assistant for Barry Alvarez for three seasons and helped the Badgers win a Big Ten title and a Rose Bowl appearance in 1993.

He then served as an assistant coach at Division II Nebraska-Omaha from 1994-2000, helping the Mavericks become three-time conference champions. He was promoted to offensive coordinator in 2000, before moving on to Nebraska where he worked for Frank Solich for four seasons. He then returned to Nebraska-Omaha for three years as the associate head coach and offensive coordinator, before moving on to Wisconsin-Whitewater in 2007.

Leipold is a 1987 graduate of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where he was a standout quarterback. He is a member of the AFCA Ethics Committee as well as the AFCA Board of Trustees.

Leipold and his wife Kelly, have a daughter, Lindsey, and a son, Landon. Lindsey plays volleyball at Stetson University (DeLand, Florida).

KENNY LOGAN JR.



Position	Safety
Number	1
Year	Sophomore
Hometown	St. Augustine, Fla.
High School	Menendez

Career Honors: 2020: All-Big 12 Honorable Mention (Returner).

2020 (So.): All-Big 12 Honorable Mention (Returner) ... Started on defense for the Jayhawks in eight games, while playing in all nine on the year ... Tops among all Jayhawks in tackles with 58 total for the season (40 solo and 18 assisted) ... Had 1.0 TFL (of six yards) and well as 1.0 sack for a loss of six yards ... On pass defense, the sophomore cornerback registered one quarterback hurry, broke up three passes and made two interceptions, with a return of 12 yards, on the year ... Also forced one fumble ... On special teams, returned 13 kickoffs for a total of 345 yards, good for an average return of 26.5 yards ... His longest return of the season was against ISU, when he went 100 yards for a touchdown. Coastal Carolina: Set a new career high in tackles with seven, surpassing his previous best of three, set three times in 2019 ... Returned one kick for 24 yards against the Chanticleers ... at Baylor: Led KU's defense at Baylor with seven tackles, 1.0 sack and 1.0 TFL ... Tied his career high in tackles, surpassing his previous high of three set against K-State in 2019 ... In the fourth quarter, recorded his first-career sack on Baylor quarterback Charlie Brewer ... The sack was a loss of six yards, while Logan also stripped Brewer for his first-career forced fumble ... Oklahoma State: Again tops in tackles for the Jayhawks' defense with 12 total (eight solo, four assisted), a new career high ... Also broke up one Cowboy pass after earning his second-straight start at safety ... at West Virginia: Collected eight tackles (five solo, three assisted) in Morgantown and broke up a Mountaineer pass ... at Kansas State: One of three Jayhawk captains for the annual Dillons Sunflower Showdown ... Co-leader of the defensive effort in Manhattan, as he collected six solo tackles on the afternoon ... His season total of 40 tackles leads the team ... Iowa State: Tallied his first-career interception in the fourth quarter, returning it 12 yards to the Kansas 30-yard line ... Also made three solo tackles and broke up one ISU pass on the afternoon ... Leads the team with 43 total tackles on the season through six games ... The sophomore's 100-yard kick return for a touchdown in the third quarter was the first of his career and he finished with 124 kickoff return yards in the game ... The 100-yard return is the longest return of the season and is tied for second in program history - tied with

Greg Heaggans vs. Missouri State (Sept. 14, 2002), Eric Vann vs. Oklahoma (Oct. 5, 1996) and June Henley vs. Colorado (Nov. 13, 1993) ... at Oklahoma: One of three team captains for the Jayhawks in Norman ... Intercepted an OU pass in the first quarter, his second INT in as many games ... With his interceptions in back-to-back games, Logan became the first Jayhawk to accomplish such a feat since 2018, when Shakial Taylor recorded interceptions in consecutive games against Texas (11-17-2018) and Oklahoma (11-23-18) ... Also returned five kickoffs, a new career high, for 118 yards with a long return of 38 yards on the afternoon ... TCU: Recorded five tackles on the day (three solo, two assisted) and also registered a quarterback hurry against the Horned Frogs ... Returned four kickoffs for a total of 64 yards, with a long return of 27 yards on the afternoon ... at Texas Tech: Tallied three total tackles (two solo, one assisted) vs. the Red Raiders ... Made his eighth start of the season (at the safety position) while having played in all nine of KU's games ... On special teams, returned one kickoff for 15 yards.

2019 (Fr.): Saw playing time in all 12 of KU's games as a true freshman ... Contributed 14 total tackles to the Jayhawks' defensive effort throughout the season (11 solo and three assisted) ... The team's top punt returner on the year, totaling 28 yards on five returns ... That was good for an average of 5.6 yards per punt return with a long return of 14 yards ... Also saw action on special teams as a kick returner; returned nine kickoffs for 160 yards, an average of 16.7 yards per return, with a long return of 25 yards. Indiana State: Saw action in the return game in the season opener ... Returned one kick for 16 yards ... Coastal Carolina: Saw playing time vs. the Chanticleers ... Did not record any stats ... at Boston College: Made three solo tackles on special teams, a new career high, in the Jayhawks' win over the Eagles ... West Virginia: Did not record any statistics in his playing time against the Mountaineers ... at TCU: Compiled 40 yards on three kickoffs, with a long return of 16 yards against the Horned Frogs ... Oklahoma: Returned one kickoff for 24 yards ... at Texas: Made his first punt return as a Jayhawk, good for 14 yards ... Texas Tech: Tied his season and career

high in tackles with three in KU's Homecoming victory over the Red Raiders ... Kansas State: Made three total tackles (two solo, one assisted) for the third time this season in the annual Dillons Sunflower Showdown ... at Oklahoma State: Tallied a pair of tackles (one solo, one assisted) against the nationally ranked Cowboys in Stillwater ... Returned a season and career-high two OSU punts for a total of six yards on special teams ... at Iowa State: Returned one Cyclone punt on the afternoon, good for eight yards ... Also made one solo tackle in Ames ... Baylor: Set new season and career highs in kickoffs returned with four, good for a total of 70 yards, with a long return of 25 yards ... Recorded a pair of solo tackles against the nationally ranked Bears ... Also had one punt return on the afternoon.

High School: Rated a three-star prospect by 247Sports.com and Rivals.com ... Played for head coach Kyle Skipper at Menendez HS ... Rushed for 1,202 yards with 18 touchdowns his senior season ... Helped lead his team to an 8-3 record ... Earned First Team All-St. John's County honors as an athlete ... Also lettered in basketball and track & field.

Personal: Son of Coretta Blount and Kenneth Logan ... Plans to major in business management... Has one brother, Brandon James and one sister, Angelina Dejuese ... Brother, Brandon, played college football at Florida ... Chose Kansas over offers from USF, Auburn, Ole Miss, Nebraska, Iowa State, Miami (Fla.), Louisville, Minnesota, Pittsburgh, Purdue, UCF and others.



KWAMIE LASSITER II



Position	Wide Receiver
Number	8
Year	Super-Senior
Hometown	Chandler, Ariz.
High School	Hamilton

Career Honors: 2020: All-Big 12 Honorable Mention (WR). 2019: Academic All-Big 12 Second Team; Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll and Athletic Director's Honor Roll (spring). 2016: KU's Scout Team Offensive Player of the Week (Iowa State).

2020 (Sr.): All-Big 12 Honorable Mention (WR) ... Tops among KU's receiving corps this year with 43 receptions and 458 yards gained through the air ... Those numbers were good for an average of 10.7 yards per catch, with a long reception of 48 yards ... Found the end zone twice when hauling in passes, which put him in a three-way tie for the team lead in that category ... On special teams, returned one kickoff for the Jayhawks, which was a gain of 19 yards. Coastal Carolina: Started the season opener at wide receiver, catching five passes for 63 yards and a touchdown ... Came down with the longest catch of his career in the fourth quarter, grabbing a 37-yard reception on a Miles Kendrick throw ... His previous long of 36 yards came against Texas in 2019 ... In addition, he added a touchdown reception from Kendrick, also in the fourth quarter, scoring from five yards out ... The touchdown was the third of his collegiate career, adding one in each of the last two seasons ... at Baylor: KU's top receiver against the Bears, making six catches and accumulating 65 yards ... Oklahoma State: Caught four passes for 43 yards with a long reception of 30 yards vs. OSU, making him KU's top receiver for the second-straight game ... at West Virginia: In KU's starting lineup at wide receiver for the third time this season against the Mountaineers, but did not record any stats ... at Kansas State: Led the Jayhawk receivers in Manhattan, recording seven catches for 58 yards ... Six of the senior's catches came in the first half alone ... Iowa State: Hauled in five receptions for a total of 66 yards, the most he has accumulated in a single game this season ... Caught a pass from Andrew Parchment for the team's second two-point conversion completed this season, with the previous successful two-point conversation coming against Coastal Carolina in the season opener ... at Oklahoma: One of three team captains for the Jayhawks in Norman ... KU's second-leading receiver against the Sooners with four receptions for 29 yards ... TCU: One of KU's four team captains for the game against the Horned Frogs ... In the first quarter, the senior caught a 48-yard touchdown pass from freshman QB

Jalon Daniels ... That touchdown was Lassiter's second of the season and fourth of his career ... His 116 receiving yards are the most for a KU receiver this season ... In addition, he is also the first KU player to have 100+ receiving yards in a game since Stephen Robinson Jr., against Texas Tech in 2019 ... at Texas Tech: KU's third team captain for the game in Lubbock ... Made his eighth start of the season at WR while seeing playing time in all nine contests ... Had five catches on the afternoon for a total of 18 yards through the air ... On special teams, returned one kickoff for 19 yards.

2019 (Jr.): Academic All-Big 12 Second Team ... Played in 11 of KU's 12 games, earning starts in each of the final three games of the season ... The team's third-leading receiver for the year, catching 34 passes for 352 yards and one touchdown ... Averaged 10.4 yards per catch, with a long reception of 36 yards ... On special teams, returned four punts for 18 yards, good for an average of 4.5 yards per return, with a long return of 11 yards ... Also registered four solo tackles. Indiana State: Saw action on special teams, returning one punt for 11 yards ... Coastal Carolina: Returned two punts for seven yards ... at Boston College: Hauled in five catches for a total of 67 yards, with a long reception of 21 yards, all new career bests ... West Virginia: Recorded three catches from quarterback Carter Stanley for a total of 45 yards and one touchdown, his first of the season ... at TCU: Saw playing time in Fort Worth, but did not record any statistics ... Oklahoma: Had one catch on the day ... at Texas: Caught five passes on the night, matching his season and career bests ... Accumulated 66 yards receiving ... His long reception of the night, 36 yards, set a new season and career high ... Made one tackle against the Longhorns, the first of his KU career ... Texas Tech: Hauled in a season and career-high eight passes for 75 total yards (also a new season and career best) in the Jayhawks' 37-34 Homecoming victory over the Red Raiders ... Kansas State: Did not play in the annual Dillons Sunflower Showdown ... at Oklahoma State: Back on the gridiron in Stillwater for KU, catching five passes for a total of 35 yards, with a long reception of 20 yards ... at Iowa State: Made his second-straight start of the season at wide receiver for the Jayhawks in Ames ...

Hauled in five receptions from quarterback Carter Stanley for a total of 61 yards on the afternoon, with a long catch of 31 yards ... Baylor: In his third start of the year, recorded two catches for a total of eight yards on offense ... Also returned one punt on the afternoon ... Made a season and career-high two solo tackles against the nationally ranked Bears.

2018 (So.): Hauled in 12 passes for 87 yards and a touchdown ... Served as KU's primary punt returner, averaging 5.6 yards per return ... Registered 14 returns for 79 yards, with a long of 21 yards ... Nicholls: Recorded 26 yards on two punt returns ... at Central Michigan: Caught three passes for five yards and returned three punts for 24 yards ... Rutgers: Returned one punt for 12 yards ... Oklahoma State: Caught his first-career touchdown as a Jayhawk for 20 yards ... at Texas Tech: Caught four balls for 41 yards.

2017 (RFr.): Played in five games ... Saw action against SEMO, Central Michigan, Texas, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State ... Oklahoma: Had one rushing attempt but it resulted in a loss of six yards.

2016 (Fr.): Did not see any game action and redshirted.

High School: Picked up two letters at Hamilton HS under head coach Steve Belles ... Earned second team all-punt return as a senior in 2015 ... Also earned one letter in track & field ... Participated in the Arizona state championships in long jump and triple jump.

Personal: Son of Ericka and the late Kwamie Lassiter ... Father, Kwamie, played at KU from 1992-94, helping lead the Jayhawks to a win in the 1992 Aloha Bowl ... Lassiter played in the NFL for the Arizona Cardinals (1995-2002), San Diego Chargers (2003) and St. Louis Rams (2004) ... Has five brothers: Eric, KaVon, Darius, Kwinton and Kwincy ... Also has two sisters: Devon and Darian ... Majoring in liberal arts and sciences.



LEADING RETURNERS
BASED ON 2020 SEASON STATS



PASSING

MILES KENDRICK
73 comp./120 att
647 yards
6 touchdowns



RUSHING

VELTON GARDNER
72 att.
325 yards
2 touchdowns



RECEIVING

KWAMIE LASSITER II
43 rec.
458 yards
2 touchdowns



DEFENSE

KENNY LOGAN JR.
58 tackles
2 interceptions

LETTERMEN RETURNING
TOTAL (43)

OFFENSE (24)

POS.	NAME	YR.	EXP.
OL	Armaj Adams-Reed	So.	1L
WR	Lawrence Arnold	RFr.	1L
OL	*Earl Bostick Jr.	RSr.	3L
OL	Bryce Cabeldue	RFr.	1L
OL	*Malik Clark	SSr.	3L
QB	*Jalon Daniels	So.	1L
TE	*Mason Fairchild	Jr.	2L
RB	Rob Fiorentino	Jr.	2L
RB	Gayflor Flomo	Sr.	2L
RB	Velton Gardner	Jr.	2L
OL	Joseph Gilbertson	RSr.	2L
WR	Tristan Goughly	So.	1L
WR	Luke Grimm	So.	1L
RB	Daniel Hishaw Jr.	So.	1L
WR	Jamahl Horne	Jr.	2L
OL	*Chris Hughes	SSr.	4L
QB	Miles Kendrick	RSr.	2L
WR	*Kwamie Lassiter II	SSr.	4L
OL	*Adagio Lopeti	SSr.	2L
WR	Steven McBride	So.	1L
FB	*Ben Miles	RSr.	2L
RB	Amauri Pesek-Hickson	RFr.	1L
FB	Spencer Roe	RJr.	1L
OL	Nick Williams	RJr.	1L

DEFENSE (16)

POS.	NAME	YR.	EXP.
DL	Jelani Arnold	RSr.	1L
LB	Taiwan Berryhill	So.	1L
LB	*Nate Betts	SSr.	2L
DL	*Sam Burt	SSr.	4L
DL	Kenean Caldwell	So.	1L
LB	Nick Channel	RJr.	1L
LB	Jay Dineen	Sr.	3L
OLB	Hayden Hatcher	Sr.	2L
LB	*Kyron Johnson	SSr.	4L
DL	Malcolm Lee	Sr.	2L
S	*Kenny Logan Jr.	Jr.	2L
CB	Duce Mayberry	So.	1L
LB	Steven Parker	RSo.	1L
LB	*Gavin Potter	Jr.	2L
DL	*Caleb Sampson	Sr.	2L
S	*Ricky Thomas	SSr.	3L

SPECIALISTS (3)

POS.	NAME	YR.	EXP.
P/K	Tabor Allen	So.	1L
K	Jacob Borcila	RSo.	1L
P	Reis Vernon	So.	1L

* - Indicates 2020 starter

INCOMING TRANSFERS
TOTAL (9)

POS.	NAME	YR.	PREV.
WR	Trevor Wilson	So.	Buffalo
DL	Eddie Wilson	Sr.	Buffalo
QB	Jason Bean	Jr.	North Texas
LB	Rich Miller	Jr.	Buffalo
DL	Zion DeBose	Sr.	Virginia Tech
C	Mike Novitsky	Jr.	Buffalo
OL	Michael Ford Jr.	RFr.	Buffalo
DL	Ronald McGee	DL	Buffalo
LB	Cornell Wheeler	LB	Michigan

2021 BIG 12 HONOREES
RETURNING (3)

POS.	NAME	HONOR (COACHES/AP)
LB	Kyron Johnson	HM
WR	Kwamie Lassiter II	HM
S/KR	Kenny Logan Jr.	HM

LETTERMEN LOST
TOTAL (22)

OFFENSE (10)

POS.	NAME	YR.	EXP.
OL	*Jacobi Lott	RJr.	3L
TE	Jack Luavasa	SSr.	2L
QB	Thomas MacVittie	SSr.	1L
OL	*Api Mane	SSr.	2L
WR	Kameron McQueen	SSr.	1L
WR	Ezra Naylor	SSr.	1L
WR	*Andrew Parchment	SSr.	2L
WR	Stephon Robinson Jr.	SSr.	2L
TE	James Sosinski	SSr.	2L
RB	Pooka Williams Jr.	Sr.	3L

DEFENSE (9)

POS.	NAME	YR.	EXP.
LB	*Denzel Feaster	SSr.	3L
S	Davon Ferguson	Sr.	2L
S	Corione Harris	Sr.	3L
DL	*Marcus Harris	RSo.	1L
CB	*Elijah Jones	SSr.	3L
CB	Kyle Mayberry	SSr.	3L
LB	Dru Prox	RSr.	3L
CB	*Karon Prunty	So.	1L
DL	*Dajon Terry	RSo.	1L

SPECIALISTS (3)

POS.	NAME	YR.	EXP.
K	Liam Jones	Sr.	3L
LS	Logan Klusman	Sr.	3L
P	Kyle Thompson	SSr.	3L

* - Indicates 2021 starter

2021 KANSAS FOOTBALL
SCHEDULE



SEPT. 3 | LAWRENCE, KAN.
vs. **SOUTH DAKOTA**



SEPT. 10 | CONWAY, S.C.
at **COASTAL CAROLINA**



SEPT. 18 | LAWRENCE, KAN.
vs. **BAYLOR**



SEPT. 25 | DURHAM, N.C.
at **DUKE**



OCT. 2 | AMES, IOWA
at **IOWA STATE**



OCT. 16 | LAWRENCE, KAN.
vs. **TEXAS TECH**



OCT. 23 | LAWRENCE, KAN.
vs. **OKLAHOMA**



OCT. 30 | STILLWATER, OKLA.
at **OKLAHOMA STATE**



NOV. 6 | LAWRENCE, KAN.
vs. **KANSAS STATE**



NOV. 13 | AUSTIN, TEXAS
at **TEXAS**



NOV. 20 | FORT WORTH, TEXAS
at **TCU**



NOV. 27 | LAWRENCE, KAN.
vs. **WEST VIRGINIA**



KANSAS FOOTBALL

FEATURE CLIPS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Kansas AD Travis Goff's Thorough Search to Hire Lance Leipold Impressed Those Who Were a Part of it	2
By Matt Tait, Lawrence Journal World/KUSports.com	
Kansas' Lance Leipold Not Flashy or Famous, But The Perfect Fit for Jayhawks	5
By Kirk Bohls, Austin American-Statesman	
New Kansas Coach Lance Leipold Knows How to Win, But Turning The Jayhawks Around is Another Task Entirely	6
By Jason Kersey, The Athletic	
Inside the First 72 Hours with Kansas Football Head Coach Lance Leipold	10
By Kansas Athletics	
The Clash of Dreams and Reality	12
By Kansas Athletics	
How Kansas Football Coach Lance Leipold Put Together a Coaching Staff That Blends the Old and New	13
By Matt Tait, Lawrence Journal World/KUSports.com	
In Contrast to Recent Hires, Choice of Lance Leipold Could Calm Chaos of KU Football	15
By Vahe Gregorian, Kansas City Star	



Kansas AD Travis Goff's thorough search to hire Lance Leipold impressed those who were a part of it

By Matt Tait, Lawrence Journal World/KUSports.com

LAWRENCE - From a distance, former Kansas football coach Glen Mason has watched six different KU athletic directors hire seven different head football coaches since he left Lawrence in 1996.

And until this year, not one of them reached out to him before making a hire.

As one of two KU coaches in the past five decades who enjoyed prolonged success with the program, Mason always thought contacting him would make sense. So that's exactly what first-year KU Athletic Director Travis Goff did.

"This is the first time that an AD ever reached out to me to pick my brain and ask for my perspective on what might be important at KU in the rebuilding job," Mason told the Journal-World shortly after Goff hired Lance Leipold away from Buffalo two months ago. "Because that's what it is. They're rebuilding. Much like we were when I took the job back in December of 1987."

Goff knew that when he took the job at Kansas. Even before the ink dried on his first contract, the 41-year-old, first-time AD was well aware of how important his impending football hire would be.

So rather than slow-playing it and allowing himself time to get settled first, Goff got right to work. It wasn't until Leipold's introductory press conference on May 3 that Goff became a regular in his own office. Up to that point, it was all search all the time.

'A beautiful plan'

Goff was introduced as KU's new AD on April 7. In the 48 hours that followed, Goff put together a search committee and began to implement the very plan that helped him get hired as KU's AD.

"He made it very clear that this would be the top priority for a while," said KU's Senior Woman Administrator Nicole Corcoran, who was joined by David Reed, Darrell Stuckey and Mike Vollmar on the search committee. "We did an initial meeting that Friday and then we took off from there and never stopped. He knew exactly where we were headed and he made it very clear that we were headed there together."

Goff's comfort in the first major coaching search of his career came from his past.

At Northwestern, where Goff worked closely with former NU AD Jim Phillips on several key hires during his nine years in Evanston, Ill., the process began to look familiar.

Whether the search was big or small, Phillips said it was always the same.

"He'd been trained in a way to where there's kind of a template you end up using with these things and then he put his own touches on it and applied it to Kansas," Phillips told the Journal-World.

Things did not always go according to plan. And Phillips said the two occasionally talked during Goff's football search.

"In those moments, you often turn to those who have been in those shoes before," Phillips said.

The conversations, Phillips recalled, were much more about Goff sticking to the plan, trusting his training and utilizing the gobs of information and feedback he and his search committee gained from KU's stakeholders — donors, coaches, student-athletes and more — in the early stages of the process.

Talking to as many KU people as possible before the search began in earnest was the foundation of Goff's vision. He and the committee members had some form of contact on every one of the 25 days between Goff's introduction as KU's new AD and Leipold's introduction as the Jayhawks' next football coach.

And Corcoran said she believed the committee may have "set records" for time spent on Zoom calls.

"He had a beautiful plan and he executed it perfectly," Phillips said.

Coaches speak

Mason and former KU coach Mark Mangino were two of the big fish in Goff's plan. He contacted both of them early on to pick their brains about what worked, what didn't and why they were able to have success at a place where so many other coaches had failed.

Almost immediately, Mangino was struck by Goff's energy.



The former KU coach told the Journal-World that the two talked about everything from facilities to recruiting to comparisons to other Big 12 programs and strategies for all of it.

“He asked a lot of good questions,” Mangino said.

Mason agreed and said he was most impressed by how Goff knew “the important questions” to ask.

“I was really impressed,” Mason said. “Especially taking into account his youth.”

Mangino said he wanted to be as helpful as possible. And his biggest message was simple: “Travis, you can’t miss.”

“You and the football coach you hire will be tethered together,” Mangino recalled telling Goff. “He needs you. You need him. And if you’re successful and find the right coach, you’ll be the toast of the town.”

“He understood that completely,” Mangino added. “He understands that football is very important to him, personally, as well as to the university. And he knows the stakes are higher for him.”

On the day of his introduction, Leipold said tying himself to an AD who had as much at stake as he did played a key role in his decision to pursue the Kansas job.

At Buffalo, Leipold worked under three different ADs in his first four seasons. And while that did not prevent him from building the Bulls program into a winner, he said the turnover was like pressing the pause button on whatever progress was being made.

“One of the things that really attracted me to this job was his enthusiasm and his passion for this university,” Leipold said of Goff. “You could see that every day. That’s at 7 a.m. and that’s at 11 p.m. To get in on the ground floor together and partner with someone at the beginning of this was an extra bonus.”

Hard work pays off

After arming himself with as much knowledge about the past as he could acquire, Goff set out to change KU’s football future.

As profiles of potential fits came and went and Goff checked references of the more serious candidates like Santa Claus with his list at Christmas, those who went along for the ride were occasionally in awe of Goff’s ability to stay organized amid a sea of data.

“He took such a thorough approach to gathering information before we even started reviewing the candidates,” Corcoran recalled. “The process was intense, exciting, exhausting and a whole lot of fun.”

Corcoran praised Goff’s ability to delegate portions of what was required to build the candidate profiles. And she said a “divide and conquer” approach allowed Goff and the committee to move quickly.

There were other people who had no ties to Kansas ties who played important roles in Goff’s search. Northwestern football coach Pat Fitzgerald, with whom Goff worked closely at NU as the school’s football administrator, proved to be a valuable sounding board from start to finish.

Tennessee AD Danny White, who hired Leipold at Buffalo back in 2014, also helped Goff vet Leipold.

White told the Journal-World that he was impressed by Goff’s willingness to go back that far to find out more. And he was even more impressed by Goff’s demeanor.

“I certainly didn’t get the feeling that Travis felt overwhelmed by the challenge,” White said. “It may have been his first hire, but, based on the conversation I had with him, you would’ve thought it was his 15th hire.”

In addition to providing as much detail as possible about Leipold, White offered his thoughts on how Goff could manage “information overload” and also talked about the process of hiring coaches in general.

“They’re all challenging,” White said. “It ultimately comes down to you have to have that gut feeling that you’re making the right choice.”

“I told Travis he can’t go wrong,” White added. “Lance is a superstar coach and he’s a superstar person and we had a great conversation. I came away from that conversation thinking, one, that Travis was going to hire Lance, but also that he was extremely thorough and he had covered all of his bases.”

That, too, was part of Goff’s plan. A big part.

“You can overcomplicate these things,” Goff said back on May 3. “(But) sometimes it’s just hard work. And I think we worked really hard, and probably, at



times, tortured Lance as we continued to dig in.”

Better days ahead?

Even though he, too, was still in the early stages of getting to know his new boss, Kansas basketball coach Bill Self saw the hard-work approach Goff preached.

“We visited,” Self told the Journal-World. “I don’t know that we went into great detail about anything. I think he had a pretty good feel on what he thought would win here. But he kept me abreast of what was going on from a strategy standpoint.”

What stuck with Self the most during the process was Goff’s ability to utilize different styles while staying locked in on a single goal.

“He was very deliberate and patient and aggressive,” Self said. “Those are sometimes three difficult combinations to master, but he was.”

Those who know him attribute Goff’s ability to do that to his passion and burning desire to get it right, whatever it is.

“He’s incredibly thorough, very organized and very thoughtful,” Phillips said.

Added Mangino: “He was very enthusiastic on the phone. Seems like a bright, bright young guy.”

While the evaluations of Goff’s approach to the Leipold hire painted an image of an AD who was ready for the moment, White’s assessment carried with it an element of history repeating.

“The work they did at Northwestern was kind of like the work Lance did at Buffalo,” White said. “They took a place and turned it into something it had never been. And I think he’s going to do the same thing at Kansas.”

Added Mason: “A lot of people say for both Travis and Lance, ‘Boy, that’s a tough situation to go into.’ But the way I see it, it’s a very attractive situation in a lot of ways. I know coaches that were there with me and a lot of the players that I had really believe that KU football should be better. A lot better. It’s not very good right now, and there’s only one way to go.”



Kansas' Lance Leipold not flashy or famous, but the perfect fit for Jayhawks

By Kirk Bohls, Austin American-Stateman

Kansas football has gone back to the drawing board so many times, the school's administration all but keeps it in its back pocket.

Just to have it handy and all.

When it comes to football coaches, the hapless Jayhawks have gone through 'em like social media passwords. They've tried 'em all, every variation.

Full-blown star power.

Like Les Miles, who won a national championship at LSU and went 3-18 at Kansas. Like Charlie Weis, who once upon a time coached Notre Dame and before that rubbed shoulders with Tom Brady before rubbing people the wrong way and winning six of 22 games.

Young up-and-comers.

Like Turner Gill, the former Nebraska quarterback who had the personality and the charisma to ignite KU football and steal a page from Cornhusker magic. Didn't translate. Went 5-19. Like David Beaty, the recruiter extraordinaire who would help the Jayhawks dip their toes in the Lone Star State with all his wealth of high school contacts. He was fired with a 6-42 record.

None of them worked.

So this time, Kansas went a different path. It went tried and true, but it didn't exactly go household name.

Meet Lance Leipold, a 57-year-old under-the-radar but very proven winner on the smaller college football circuit. Even though he won a staggering six Division III national championships and went 45-0 during one span at his alma mater, Wisconsin-Whitewater, he looks more like an accountant or a history professor than a Nick Saban. Or like an FBI agent, which he once aspired to be.

And he's not into gimmicky one-liners and locker room posters and splashy names for his offense as much as he is about fundamental football, talent evaluation, player development and adjusting to the personnel he has. Remember, this is a fellow who had runaway success off the beaten path in Division III, the arena where no scholarships are offered.

"This is an opportunity to do something at a place where people don't think it can be done," Leipold said. "Probably a lot more than I care to think about it."

Yeah, when a program produces just six bowl victories in 121 seasons and hasn't had a winning season in 13 years, you could say the bar is pretty low. And Leipold might be just the guy to pull off the improbable. He could be the next Bill Snyder or Gary Barnett, who resurrected dead-in-the-water programs at Kansas State and Northwestern.

"I'm not so sure anyone can fit in a 15-minute infomercial about me. I'm a pretty boring guy," this humble, grounded Midwesterner said about six weeks after he was hired from Buffalo. "As my wife would say, I'm pretty vanilla. My favorite milkshake is vanilla. And my wife says, 'Of course, it is.'"

Vanilla or not, he's the flavor of the month for a Kansas program that hasn't had a winning season since an 8-5 mark in 2008 and has just six Big 12 wins in the past 11 years.

He's already added six transfers from his Buffalos roster — including a pair of defensive linemen and an all-conference center whom Texas' Steve Sarkisian tried to enlist — to bolster a team that played a national-high 27 true freshman in the 0-9 wreck of last season. And North Texas transfer Jason Bean will try to nail down the starting quarterback's job in a deep backfield that has several promising players.

So why did this Wisconsin native pick up stock in Buffalo, where he shaped the Bulls into a model mid-major program that has won two bowl games and got the football team ranked in the Associated Press Top 25 for the first time in school history? Now he's turned his sights on the graveyard of college football programs.

Is he nuts?

Maybe, but only in the best of ways. It was kind of crazy how he even got into football.

Leipold majored in sociology and criminal justice with a coaching minor at Wisconsin-Whitewater.

"I was getting the Sunday papers," he said. "I was looking for ads for sociology jobs. And there weren't any. I'd really wanted to go into the FBI or the Secret Service."

So he began working part time as a police officer in his hometown of Jefferson, population 6,000. They gave him a badge and a gun and one bullet. "They called me Barney Fife," he joked.



New Kansas coach Lance Leipold knows how to win, but turning the Jayhawks around is another task entirely

By Jason Kersey, The Athletic

The day after Kansas' spring game, new coach Lance Leipold sat down with interim coach Emmett Jones. It was Leipold's first meeting with a current KU staffer.

"For both of us, there was a lot of uncertainty," Leipold said. "Is this a fit? Is it not? Who is this guy? But I can tell you, 30 seconds into the conversation, I knew this was a humble man, a great person and someone who wants to be part of the program and get this thing turned around. He was put in a very difficult position and handled it with class."

KU put Jones in charge of the program temporarily after an unprecedented and sudden upheaval, with coach Les Miles and athletic director Jeff Long being fired in March after a 2013 report was released detailing allegations that Miles had sexually harassed student workers while at LSU. Jones' stop-gap elevation from wide receivers coach came after several KU players publicly advocated for that move.

By the time Leipold, 57, accepted the Kansas job in late April, he'd already completed spring practices with Buffalo. He spent the previous six seasons with the Bulls, earning MAC Coach of the Year honors twice and leading the program to three consecutive bowl appearances and its first-ever appearance in the AP Top 25.

Before that, Leipold won six Division III national championships in eight seasons at Wisconsin-Whitewater, his alma mater. This is a man accustomed to winning, taking on what is unquestionably the greatest challenge of his career, and perhaps one of the greatest challenges a new head coach has ever faced.

Since 2008, Kansas' record is 26-115 and its Big 12 record is 7-98. The Jayhawks have finished alone in last place in the conference each year since 2015. Last season, Kansas allowed 46 points per game — dead last in the FBS — and scored only 15.8 points per game. Leipold is Kansas' seventh head coach — including interim coaches — since Mark Mangino left in 2009. It's almost unfathomable that Mangino's 2007 Jayhawks team finished 12-1, won the Orange Bowl and at one point reached No. 2 in the BCS Standings.

And due to the odd nature of his hiring, Leipold still hasn't led a practice with his new team. He won't really know what he's working with until preseason camp begins next month.

Leipold tried to maintain some consistency by retaining Jones and three other assistant coaches from Miles' staff, while also bringing with him his long-time coordinators and other former Buffalo staffers. Six Buffalo players transferred to Kansas following Leipold's hiring.

"It's a new day," Leipold said. "It's a new staff. There will be stability. That's what this program has needed. We've assembled a staff of coaches who want to be here, who believe in this program and who believe in this university."

Roster analysis

Quarterbacks: Kansas started three quarterbacks last season, although it was Jalon Daniels and Miles Kendrick who played the vast majority of the snaps. Daniels started six games as a true freshman, completing 50 percent of his pass attempts for 718 yards, one touchdown and four interceptions. He also rushed for 176 yards and three scores. Kendrick threw six touchdowns and five picks.

"Both of those guys showed signs this past spring," Jones said. "Both of those guys improved in certain areas. At the same time, we wanted to add more competition in that room."

In that spirit, KU added Jason Bean to the roster this summer. Bean, a junior, started seven games last season for North Texas, throwing for 1,131 yards, 14 touchdowns and five interceptions.

Kansas also signed two high school quarterbacks in the 2021 class: Conrad Hawley from Peculiar, Mo., and Ben Easters from Brownsburg, Ind.

"We expect that to be a competitive battle throughout camp," Leipold said. "We feel that we'll develop a practice model that will give them all ample opportunities to show what they can do."

Running backs: Kansas returns three of its top four rushers from last season. Junior Velton Gardner leads the way, having rushed for 325 yards and two touchdowns last season. Sophomore Daniel Hishaw and redshirt freshman Amauri Pesek-Hickson are back, too. Pesek-Hickson rushed for 145 yards last season in four games. Hishaw took on a more prominent role last season when star Pooka Williams opted out after the first four games, and finished with 229 yards.

Leipold chose to retain running backs coach Jonathan Wallace from the previous staff.

"We've got good depth in that room," Jones said. "We've got big bodies; we've got scatbacks."

Leipold also likes what he's seen from Devin Neal, a 5-foot-11, 208-pound freshman from Lawrence, Kan., who chose the Jayhawks over offers from Iowa, Kansas State, Nebraska and Oklahoma State.



Senior fullback Ben Miles started twice last season.

Wide receivers/tight ends: Kwamie Lassiter II, the Jayhawks' 2020 leading receiver, chose to take advantage of the NCAA's blanket waiver and return for his super senior season. He had 458 yards and two touchdowns last season. Jones said he believes it important to have "three to five guys" he can count on, and thinks he might have that, even though last year's second-leading receiver, Andrew Parchment, transferred to Florida State, and Stephon Robinson Jr., who had 727 yards in 2019 and was injured last season, transferred to Northwestern.

Offensive line: The Kansas offensive line struggled mightily last season amid a revolving door of starters — with most of those starters playing multiple positions — and coaches. Consider this: When Leipold hired Scott Fuchs as his offensive line coach in May, Fuchs became the KU offensive line's fourth coach in a matter of months. Miles fired Luke Meadows in November and promoted John Morookian, an analyst, to fill the spot for the remainder of the season, then hired Lee Grimes for the full-time spot. Grimes was only in the job for a few months.

Kansas returns seven offensive linemen with starting experience. Malik Clark started all nine games last season, has 31 career starts and chose to return for his super senior season. He played both left tackle and left guard last season. Also back is senior Earl Bostick, who started seven games at left or right tackle in 2020. Other returners with career starts include senior Chris Hughes (right guard/center), senior Adagio Lopeti (center, left guard, right guard, right tackle), sophomore Armaj Adams-Reed (right guard), redshirt freshman Bryce Cabeldue (right tackle) and redshirt freshman Garrett Jones (center). "It's an area that needs to be improved," Leipold said. "Some of it has to do with experience; some of it has to do with health. The consistency's gotta be there. We've had guys who had to line up in different spots, so we've gotta find a way to build a two-deep and get these guys in positions where they can consistently play."

Reinforcements joined the roster in May from Buffalo. Junior Mike Novitsky started 20 games at center for Buffalo and was a first-team All-MAC performer last season. After Novitsky entered the transfer portal, he heard from the likes of Notre Dame, Florida and Tennessee but decided to reunite with his old coach. Michael Ford also joined the Jayhawks via Buffalo. He didn't appear in any games last season for the Bulls, but Leipold said he was expected to be the team's starting left tackle following spring practices.

Junior Colin Grunhard also transferred from Notre Dame. He appeared in 13 games over three seasons in South Bend.

Defensive line: Kansas will transition from a three- to a four-man front under Leipold and defensive coordinator Brian Borland, and hopes that allows it to get more pressure on opposing quarterbacks. The Jayhawks finished last season with 42 tackles for loss and nine sacks — the fewest in the Big 12 in both categories by far. KU's 2020 leader in TFLs — Marcus Harris — transferred to Auburn.

Defensive ends to watch include senior Kyron Johnson, senior Malcolm Lee, senior Hayden Hatcher, sophomore Jereme Robinson and sophomore Steven Parker. Johnson started all nine games last season, while Lee and Parker had four and two starts, respectively.

At the interior defensive line spots, a key addition is senior Eddie Wilson, another Buffalo-to-Kansas transfer. Wilson started 23 games over the past three seasons for the Bulls and was a third-team All-MAC performer in 2020. Senior Ronald McGee also transferred to KU from Buffalo. He started once last season for the Bulls.

Returning interior defensive linemen include senior Caleb Sampson (15 career starts); senior Sam Burt (eight), sophomore Kenean Caldwell and redshirt freshman Caleb Taylor.

Linebackers: Top returners at the inside spots are junior Gavin Potter, junior Nick Channel and senior Jay Dineen. Potter and Channel finished last season with 35 and 30 tackles, respectively.

This is another area where a Buffalo transfer can help. Junior Rich Miller, who appeared in 20 games over the past two seasons for the Bulls, joined the Jayhawks and brings experience within the system. Leipold said Miller played all three linebacker positions for Buffalo.

Sophomore Taiwan Berryhill and redshirt freshman Krishawn Brown are players to watch at outside linebacker.

Defensive backs: Sophomore safety Kenny Logan Jr. is a team leader and one of the best returning players on the roster. He led the Jayhawks with 58 tackles last season and also recorded two interceptions and a sack.

"His enthusiasm is contagious," Leipold said. "When you couple that with the role he has in the defense, he's definitely a building block and a cornerstone."

Senior Ricky Thomas returned for his bonus season and has also been a team leader. His 42 tackles ranked second on the team behind Logan. Jones also praised O.J. Burroughs and Jayson Gilliom, freshman early enrollees who went through spring ball.

At cornerback, the situation is a little more dire, as the Jayhawks don't return any starters. Elijah Jones, who started eight games last season, transferred to Oregon State. Then Karon Prunty, who started all nine games as a freshman last season, entered the transfer portal in June. Prunty was one of the more exciting young players on the roster and one of only three players to start all nine games for KU last season. He broke up 10 passes. Sophomore Duece Mayberry, redshirt freshman Ra'Mello Dotson and redshirt freshman Johnquai Lewis are all potential starters at corner, as well as freshmen Jacobee Bryant, DeVonte Wilson and Cam'Ron Dabney.

Special teams: Sophomore punter Reis Vernon is back after averaging 37.8 yards per punt last season. Sophomore kicker Jacob Borcila made six field goal attempts and all 10 extra-point attempts in 2020.



Logan returned one kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown last season and averaged 26.5 yards per return, ranking fourth in the Big 12. Lassiter handled punt return duties last season.

What others are saying about Kansas

The Athletic spoke to a Big 12 assistant coach about the Jayhawks, who he believes are a long way from being competitive.

“Since Mangino, it’s just been going downhill,” the assistant said. “Charlie Weis really destroyed that program. I know people who were on the team and on the staff with Weis. It’s very difficult to sustain it there.

“When you put all of that together, I think it’s very difficult to win in a competitive Big 12. You already had problems. You’re in the state of Kansas, and it’s hard to recruit there. Kansas State has a hold on all the junior colleges. It’s a basketball school. There’s been turmoil with the athletic director. It’s just a challenge all the way around. They had to play so many freshmen last year, and if you’re depending on freshmen to play, you’ve got a big problem — and I’m not saying if you’re playing freshmen, but if you’re depending on them, if they have to play and you have no choice.

“You’re going through spring practice, the time where you really create your team, and you’re doing that with an interim coach. So you’ve got an interim coach in there during a time you’re supposed to be building the team. Are those kids really building with confidence, or are they thinking, ‘Man, this is about to change, I’m not buying into this’?

“So now, your true building has to come in fall camp, and with a new coach. I just think it’s gonna be a struggle.

“Do they have talent? There’s some talent. They had a really good receiving group. They had a good running back with Pooka, but now he’s gone. They had some defensive linemen who were OK.

“It’s just not a good situation.”

How the Jayhawks Recruited from 2018 to 2021

Kansas has been struggling to pull itself out of a scholarship crisis since the Weis era, and that job now falls to Leipold, who has already shown himself to be more receptive to transfers than his predecessor.

Still, it’s tough to recruit given the uncertainty surrounding the program, a decade’s worth of dreadful results and the fact that Leipold didn’t get started with the team until after the spring.

“Because of our situation, we’ve gotta fully evaluate what’s here, and how it’s gonna fit into what we’re doing on both sides of the ball before we go start making a bunch of recruiting decisions,” Leipold said in June.

He does believe, though, that his track record and the sense of stability he plans to provide gives him something to work with.

“We’re gonna sell opportunity and competition,” Leipold said. “When teams haven’t been successful in the win-loss column, you’re always looking for chances to get better. We’re looking for guys who want to play in one of the best conferences in college football and play early in their careers. That opportunity presents itself right here at the University of Kansas.”

Transfers to know

Kansas lost several starters from last year’s team to the transfer portal, but gained several transfers in the past few months who could be immediate contributors. That starts with the six players who followed Leipold from Buffalo.

Leipold is quick to point out that those players made their decisions independent of him. All had other opportunities, he said, and some players who left Buffalo after he did chose to go elsewhere. Cornerback Tyrone Hill went to Washington State and offensive lineman Jacob Gall went to Baylor, for example.

Novitsky at center, Ford at offensive tackle, Wilson at wide receiver, Miller at linebacker and McGee and Wilson at defensive tackle are expected to be in the mix for starting spots immediately.

“Obviously, they know our system,” Leipold said. “But more importantly, they know the culture. They know us as coaches, and they can be another bridge of leadership through the transition. They know how we got to where we got at Buffalo, and they can reaffirm that to our new players and our youth.” Then there’s Bean, the QB Kansas added from North Texas. Given how much the Jayhawks struggled with consistency behind center last season, Bean should have a chance to play. He didn’t arrive on campus until after the spring, but that might not be such a huge disadvantage in this case, given that Leipold and his staff won’t begin to fully install their system until preseason camp.

Impact of coaching changes

In assembling his staff, Leipold sought to create a mix of coaches he knows well with coaches who know the KU program.

Borland became Wisconsin-Whitewater defensive coordinator in 2002 and remained in that position after Leipold took the head coaching job. Borland went with Leipold to Buffalo and served as defensive coordinator, and is now in the same role at Kansas. Similarly, Andy Kotelnicki became Leipold’s offensive coordinator at Whitewater in 2013 and followed him to Buffalo and Kansas.

Linebackers coach Chris Simpson is also a Buffalo transplant, as are quarterbacks coach Jim Zebrowski and Fuchs, the O-line coach.



The only hire who wasn't either at Buffalo or already at Kansas was special teams coordinator Jacob Schoonover, who came to KU after spending the previous three seasons in the same role at Bowling Green.

Leipold retained Emmett Jones as wide receivers coach as well as Wallace, the running backs coach, and cornerbacks coach Chevis Jackson and defensive line coach Kwahn Drake.

"As we've been able to blend things together, it's been very good," Leipold said. "Many times when you see staffing changes, you're combining a bunch of guys from different places. I think one of the things that's really helped us is that it's just combining thoughts and terminology. I've been really pleased with how it's gone."

Leipold also brought along strength coach Matt Gildersleeve from Buffalo, as well as several analysts and staffers.

Schedule Analysis

Kansas' first two games of the 2021 season — at home against South Dakota and at Coastal Carolina — will come on Friday nights. Coastal Carolina went 11-1 last season, finishing 12th in the final College Football Playoff rankings. The Chanticleers beat Kansas 38-23 last season.

The Jayhawks also will play at Duke in a nonconference game Sept. 25. KU and Duke have met twice before, splitting those meetings in 2009 and 2014. Kansas didn't win any Big 12 games last season, marking the fifth winless conference record in the past 10 seasons. The last time KU won more than one Big 12 game? That would be 2008, Mangino's second-to-last season. That was also the last season KU won a Big 12 game on the road.

The Jayhawks will almost certainly be underdogs in every conference game this season, although they do get five home Big 12 games. It would surely be a sign of progress if the Jayhawks could win a league game or two in Leipold's first year, but that might be a big ask.

Final assessment

Leipold has a tall task ahead. Kansas remains mired in one of the worst stretches for any program in college football history, and that only worsened after Miles' ugly departure and Leipold having to start over after the spring. But Leipold is a coach with a long track record of success and a positive attitude. Can he finally be the one to end this cycle? Given the specific, unique challenges of this situation, it might be tough to glean much about the future trajectory of the program from his first season.



Inside the First 72 Hours with Kansas Football Head Coach Lance Leipold

By Kansas Athletics

When Lance Leipold was preparing for life after college, he had two career paths he was interested in pursuing. He was either going to get into law enforcement with an eye on joining the Secret Service or stick with what he knew — football.

While he surely would have made a great Secret Service agent, it's clear Leipold was born to be a coach.

On Monday, in front of a large throng of media members, supporters and fellow staff members, Leipold was introduced as the new head football coach at the University of Kansas.

The man who won six Division III national championships at Wisconsin-Whitewater, led Buffalo to its highest ranking ever in the AP Top 25 and won 100 games faster than any coach ever to do it is exactly where he should be.

The head coach of a Power 5 program.

"If words could really express in any way, shape or form how truly humbled and honored I am to have this opportunity," Leipold said. "People ask sometimes, what is your dream job or where do you think you're going? When you're a small-town guy in the Midwest that plays Division III football, it's a day at a time.

"Dreams are one thing, and reality is another. Somehow those two have meshed here today," Leipold said.

Seventy-two hours before reality meshed with dreams, Leipold officially arrived in Lawrence, ready to dig in as the new coach of the Jayhawks. With the Kansas sun shining bright and members of the pep band and Kansas Athletics staff on hand, Leipold, along with his wife Kelly, daughter Lindsey and son, Landon, took his first steps in Lawrence on Friday afternoon on the tarmac of the Lawrence airport.

Hours after he bid farewell to his team at Buffalo and departed a place that he left in considerably better shape than he found it, Leipold made his way straight to the Anderson Family Football Complex to check out his new digs.

Before he entered, he took an extra minute to admire the statues of Gale Sayers and John Hadl, before walking through the front door to start the next chapter of his coaching career. He made his way through the recruiting suite, before checking out the team meeting room, locker room, weight room and athletic training facilities.

The final stop of his building tour fittingly came in the head coach's office.

With his family by his side, Leipold took a stroll through the office that overlooks the field at David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium. He then stepped outside with his family and watched his new team take the field for its final practice of the spring.

After checking out the indoor practice facility, Leipold made his way through the stadium, before heading to the field to address the team after practice.

His message there was clear.

He's here to win. And he's here to win with the players who have already dedicated themselves to the crimson and blue.

"I could not be more proud to have the opportunity to work with you," Leipold told his team. "Everything I've heard about you, your character, your work ethic and where this program is heading, could not get me more excited...You can control your attitude and your effort, and how you go about it each day."

He continued: "I promise you this. I've been very fortunate over 30 years of coaching to be around some excellent programs, some excellent leaders, some excellent blueprints on how to win football games. It's not easy. It's not going to happen like that. But we will win here. I promise you. All I ask is for your best."

That set the stage for the team's Spring Game on Saturday night, which Leipold took in from the suites at Memorial Stadium with his family. He watched as much football as he could, while he met some loyal Jayhawk supporters throughout the night.

Following a work day on Sunday, where he rolled up his sleeves and began tackling various assignments in his new role, Leipold woke up Monday morning, ready to make it all official.

He walked into the indoor practice facility just after 10 a.m., along with Director of Athletics Travis Goff, prepared to meet with the media and discuss what attracted him to Kansas.



“Our plan is to win, and win with the players who are here right now,” Leipold said. “This isn’t a situation where we are going to look to get ‘our’ players in. I said the same thing at the last job. And I feel very strongly about that. This university and athletic department have made a commitment to these young men, and we want them here to develop and be a part of that.

“It’s interesting times right now, and there’s a lot that’s going to be new, and everything is going to be sorting through, but again when you have an outstanding university in a great location, playing in a great conference, we have a lot of things that should keep players here and should attract players in the future in recruiting.”

A football coach through and through, despite a flirtation with law enforcement.



The Clash of Dreams and Reality

By Kansas Athletics

A new opportunity for the University of Kansas football coach Lance Leipold hasn't changed the man underneath—the one with the deep-seated belief that it's a coach's responsibility to leave a program better than when he found it.

As he sat comfortably in the chair of his new office after a career-defining day that will be engrained in his memory forever, you could spot the fire burning through the eyes of a man that has a tendency of speaking success into existence.

It's the same fire that has burned within him ever since he decided to take up coaching under the stars in the dormitory of a football camp many, many years ago.

The Start

He was just lending a helping hand for a little extra money after finishing his football career at Wisconsin-Whitewater and earning his college degree. His initial hope was to land a job in law enforcement, but those state exams were tough to crack and had him looking elsewhere.

That's when the summer football camps came up.

"I needed something to do and make a little money, so I started working summer football camps," said Leipold. "[I remember] walking back to the dormitories where we were all staying at, and one of the coaches running the camp told me he had received a lot of compliments about me. I went to bed that night and was kind of looking for direction in what I was doing. Then I thought, 'I'm getting compliments, and people think I'm kind of good at it. And I'm really kind of liking it. Maybe I should look a little more into [coaching].'"

Not long after the summer football camp, Leipold was offered an opportunity by his former head coach at Wisconsin-Whitewater to come on and help out during the fall training camp, and the rest was history.

Improving Every Day

He hasn't stopped since.

"[My favorite part] about coaching is watching people improve," Leipold said. "Improve from the first day they walk into the door and the maturity they leave with. Just improving on the field and as a person. I think that gets lost sometimes. It's just about being better today than you were yesterday in some facet of what you're doing. When you just ask to be a little bit better and challenge yourself to standards that maybe you don't realize you can even reach, the sky really is the limit."

Clearly, Leipold is a man of his word. At Buffalo, the Bulls went 7-17 in the coach's first two years, before going 30-16 over his final four, displaying his burning desire for improvement.

He has carried that philosophy throughout his entire coaching career.

When he arrived at Wisconsin-Whitewater in 2007, his dream was to bring an NCAA Division III championship to the Warhawks. During his seven years with the program, he won six national titles and forged the program into a perennial contender.

Then eight years later, he touched down at the University of Buffalo with the hopes of taking the Bulls' football program to heights unseen. In his final season, the Bulls cracked the AP Top-25 college football rankings for the first time in program history.

At Monday's press conference, he talked about the meshing of dreams and reality into an opportunity to finally coach a Power Five team, but he also never shied away from the looming expectations at Kansas.

"The goal is to win championships, pure and simple—one day at a time," Leipold said. "Become a consistent winner, pay attention to detail—do it with great energy, passion, and effort. It's not overly complicated, and it's going to take some work. We've started some of those processes now, and we'll continue as soon as we complete this press conference today."



How Kansas football coach Lance Leipold put together a coaching staff that blends the old and new

By Matt Tait, Lawrence Journal World/KUSports.com

While new Kansas football coach Lance Leipold had some semblance of control of his destiny during the recent coaching search that brought him to Lawrence, there were some uneasy days for two staffs that waited on the outcome.

In Buffalo, N.Y., where Leipold spent the previous six years and worked closely with some of his closest friends, their regular contact went quiet.

“He got the job and announced it on a Friday morning and he kind of left me hanging out there all weekend long until Sunday night (when he asked me), ‘Are you with us,’” new KU defensive coordinator Brian Borland said Tuesday.

Borland’s immediate response: “Yes, I am.”

“So, it’s been kind of a whirlwind,” he added. “But it’s pretty exciting.”

Borland, new KU offensive coordinator Andy Kotelnicki, and others, had discussed the topic enough times in the past, when Leipold’s name surfaced in other job searches, to feel confident that if KU deemed Leipold to be their guy, they’d be going with him.

Still, this was their livelihoods on the line, jobs they did for a man they liked and believed in and were comfortable around. Until they knew for sure that they were part of his future plans, there were some restless nights.

“You never know, right,” Kotelnicki said this week. “You don’t know the stipulations and all that sort of stuff. But I believed in our relationship (and thought) we’d have an opportunity to go together.”

In Lawrence, where former KU coach Les Miles’ staff was in the middle of spring football, the uncertainty was even greater.

None of them knew Leipold. They barely knew new Kansas Athletic Director Travis Goff, for that matter. And because of that, the possibility that KU and its new football coach, whoever it wound up being, would wipe the slate clean and start all the way over was neither hard to imagine nor at all comforting.

Having a job to do each day helped them get through it.

“That was the biggest thing,” cornerbacks coach Chevis Jackson said Tuesday. “Show up and work. That’s where I was. Just working. It was just another Tuesday in Lawrence.”

Defensive line coach Kwahn Drake fell back on words of wisdom from his grandmother to help him navigate the uncertain times.

“She always said, ‘If you’re going to pray, there’s no sense in worrying. If you’re going to worry, there’s no sense in praying,’” Drake recalled. “So the approach that most of us took was to do our (job).”

While they all had something to lean on to help them wait things out, none of it was easy for guys on either staff. In the end, Leipold brought five Buffalo assistants with him to be full-time assistants at Kansas and he asked five full-time assistants from the previous staff at KU to join him.

Others from both Buffalo and KU also joined Leipold’s new staff, but in different, off-the-field roles.

While the meshing of the two groups appears to be going well thus far — the fact that Leipold brought his coordinators with him has helped a lot in the transition — it was Leipold’s approach that gave it the best chance to succeed.

Rather than telling KU holdovers Jackson, Drake, Emmett Jones, Jacob Schoonover and Jonathan Wallace that they were being retained, he told them simply, “I’m hiring you.”

“He said those words,” Drake recalled. “That was major for me, and I was excited to hear it from him. That was the first time I’d heard it like that.”

Added Wallace: “For coach to say it and put it in that sense, that means he wants us. He wants us to be here. And I think you need that.”

Just like that, the new coaching staff was a team. No my guys versus the holdovers. No new versus old. No thoughts of, “Well, he had to keep some of them.”

Just us. We. A group known as Lance Leipold’s coaching staff.

When asked what he was looking for when interviewing the previous staff about sticking around, Leipold said one thing mattered above all else.



“Their desire that they wanted to be here and be part of this was No. 1,” Leipold said Tuesday.

For those he kept, proving that was the easiest part of the whole process.

Wallace said his approach was about being open and honest. He emphasized that he wanted to stick around so the players he coached could benefit from some true consistency for a change.

Drake made sure to express the passion and enthusiasm he had developed for Kansas football, the players and the program’s potential, during his first two years in town.

“When you come to a place, you invest not just yourself, but your heart, your emotions, your family. I purchased a home here,” Drake said. “Sometimes when guys get retained, it’s a little bit of you’re over there in the corner. When it comes to coach Leipold, it’s always this is what we’re going to do, and this is how we’re going to move it forward.”

The formation of a new staff actually provided Leipold’s new crew with its first true teaching opportunity.

For the Buffalo gang, it’s been all about showing how to handle new challenges. They appear to be meeting this one head on and with great enthusiasm.

For the coaches who were already here, it’s about showing the players how to deal with adversity. None of them knew whether they would be around this summer when Leipold was hired. But they continued to coach and teach and perfect and preach.

“There is uncertainty,” Wallace said. “Does it make you uncomfortable? Sure. But, at the end of the day, you’ve got to understand what’s important first, and that’s these young men. That’s my job. To make sure that they get the teachings that they need. So it’s how can I be an example for them?”



In contrast to recent hires, choice of Lance Leipold could calm chaos of KU football

By Vahe Gregorian, Kansas City Star

Virtually since Kansas cast out Mark Mangino in 2009, the football program has been stranded between limbo and chaos.

From lunges of faith to gimmicks to backfiring shortcuts, from being relegated to go cheapskate to over-correcting with a “name” coach engulfed in smoke and mirrors, KU is 21-108 overall and 6-91 in the Big 12 ... to say nothing of the smoldering trail of buyouts and the residual impact of confounding associated sideshows.

Meanwhile, here’s what Kansas hasn’t tried in that span: an understated veteran coach whose resume speaks volumes on his behalf; a coach whose career record isn’t a haphazard jumble of incomplete reports or curious twists but one of constancy and competence and development over the years ... and a logical trajectory to the here and now.

That’s what Lance Leipold represents for KU.

And while a calming presence and fine track record at different tiers of competition are no guarantee of success in the Big 12, and while the first weeks on the job in an offseason provide little gauge for where this is all going, it’s also reasonable to suggest that Kansas football can’t be competitive without first furnishing a sense of normalcy and direction that has been in scarce supply for more than a decade now.

And, wow, does Leipold seem refreshingly normal, which is not to say merely ordinary.

Much as he projected in his introductory news conference a few weeks ago, what was most striking when he introduced his staff recently was his no-frills practicality and the absence of theatrics or drama.

It was a reminder that vanilla is a flavor, too, one all the more appealing after all that tutti frutti. He comes off as confident, to be sure, but mostly in that sort of way that suggests he’s from the school of underpromise and over-deliver.

As such, he exuded the straightforward and methodical. He was pleasant and engaged, yes, but virtually sans quips and one-liners — except for his bit about needing to clone the staff since there’s so much to do.

But something else stood out about the 57-year-old Leipold. He doesn’t shun the responsibility of the spotlight but doesn’t need it for one reason in particular:

Because this job, as he sees and lives it, is about the collaborative and the collective.

You could tell that in his ego-free, galvanizing and smart decision to retain five former Les Miles assistants in what he called “new jobs” as part of an entirely different enterprise.

And you could also see it in how he credited the broader staff he largely brought with him from Buffalo, including offensive coordinator Andy Kotelnicki and defensive coordinator Brian Borland

“I don’t stand before you,” he said, “without them.”

In Kotelnicki, Borland, offensive line coach Scott Fuchs and director of sports performance Matt Gildersleeve, who came with Leipold from Buffalo, you can sense some of the composite picture of what that means.

Kotelnicki, who has been with Leipold the last nine years at Wisconsin-Whitewater and Buffalo, spoke of Leipold’s trust in him to do his job and as a great delegator.

“He’s great at big-picture thinking,” he said, “and he’s good at connecting the puzzle pieces.”

Borland, who has known Leipold since they were in middle school in adjacent towns in Wisconsin, pointed to Leipold’s “vision for what can be.”

“But there’s lots of guys who, to me, have vision but they have no basis in making things happen: It’s pie-in-the-sky kind of vision ...” he said. “He’s got the vision, but he’s also got feet-on-the-ground practicality to get things done.

“And there’s a formula for that. I can’t exactly say what the formula is. I just know there’s a formula that we use, that we have, that comes from him, that works.”

Fuchs, too, pointed to Leipold having “big-picture ideas” but not micro-managing. And Gildersleeve perhaps summed that all up at once as he spoke of



admiring the way Leipold empowers his staff and constantly talks about “we vs me.”

His ability to manage a culture, Gildersleeve said, is the sort of stuff that would have had him running a Fortune 500 company if he weren't coaching. He is humble and open-minded enough to know both what he's good at and the areas in which others around him should be minding his gaps, and he welcomes dissenting opinions from this staff.

“Even when he doesn't disagree,” Gildersleeve said, “he plays devil's advocate because he wants to make sure that's the right way to do it.”

Speaking of devil's advocacy, while it's certainly easier to see in hindsight, it seemed evident along the way that KU could have used more of that in its series of regrettable hires since Mangino.

It's also true that Leipold may not ultimately look as good in the rear-view mirror as he does right now, especially given fan apathy, resource challenges and the sheer dead weight of the last decade-plus he has to shrug off just to be able to have a chance in recruiting alone.

Just the same, hiring a man who won six Division III national championships at Wisconsin-Whitewater, his alma mater, and went 30-16 in his last four seasons at Buffalo against better-endowed programs is logical and smart ... and a considerably different approach.

And just maybe it's a step toward order at last coming out of chaos for KU football.



2021 SCHEDULE

SEPT.
3



VS.

SOUTH DAKOTA

SEPT.
10



AT

COASTAL CAROLINA

SEPT.
18



VS.

BAYLOR

SEPT.
25



AT

DUKE

OCT.
2



AT

IOWA STATE

OCT.
16



VS.

TEXAS TECH

OCT.
23



VS.

OKLAHOMA

OCT.
30



AT

OKLAHOMA STATE

NOV.
6



VS.

KANSAS STATE

NOV.
13



AT

TEXAS

NOV.
20



AT

TCU

NOV.
27



VS.

WEST VIRGINIA

ROCKWALK